

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 and 16-20 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 10-15 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Thus, no new matter is added.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration (as the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution); (c) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; (d) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (e) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant appreciates the Office Action's indication that claims 1-9 and 13-20 are allowed.

II. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent JP 10-54960 to Saito; and rejects claims 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Saito in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,781,236 to Shinbori or U.S. Patent No. 5,940,127 to Nakajima.

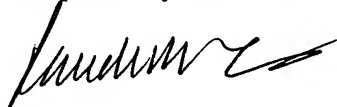
Claims 10-12 are canceled, and thus the rejections of these claims are now moot. Withdrawal of the rejection is thus respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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